



Analysis of Sport Tourism Potential in Pasir Kencana Beach, Pekalongan City

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Article Info

History Articles

Received:

July 2025

Accepted:

July 2025

Published:

December 2025

Keywords:

*Analysis, Sports Potential,
Sport Tourism*

Abstract

This research analyzes the potential for sport tourism in Pantai Pasir Kencana, located in Pekalongan City, Central Java, Indonesia. The objectives include: (1) identifying the current conditions of sport tourism facilities and infrastructure; (2) examining the challenges and limitations in the development process; and (3) mapping potential through a SWOT analysis framework. The study employs a qualitative descriptive method, involving data collection through observation, interviews, and documentation. Data validity was ensured through triangulation. The findings reveal that while infrastructure renovation has enhanced the area's appeal, many sport-specific facilities remain underdeveloped.

Furthermore, its growth is hindered by a lack of promotional efforts, limited organized sports events, and weak stakeholder collaboration. Despite these, the site holds strong potential due to its location, cultural assets, and visitor interest. Recommendations include strategic planning, community engagement, and enhancement of sport-related infrastructure to foster sustainable sport tourism.

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p-ISSN 2252-648X

e-ISSN 2502-4477

INTRODUCTION

According to Law No. 11 of 2022 concerning Sports, specifically Chapter X, the responsibility for planning, procurement, utilization, maintenance, and supervision of sports infrastructure rests with the central government, regional governments, and the community. This aims to ensure that sports facilities remain affordable, accessible, and adequate to meet community needs. Adequate sports facilities are expected to increase public interest in exercise, maintain health, and reduce the risk of diseases caused by physical inactivity.

Tourism and sports are multidimensional and interdisciplinary disciplines, encompassing various aspects, including those of other disciplines. When sports and tourism are combined, the term "*sports tourism*" emerges (Lewis, 2024). This term has become increasingly popular, and more and more tourists are interested in sports tourism. Sports tourism is a travel activity undertaken with specific motivations related to sporting events or activities (Nabila et al., 2024). The development of *sports tourism* is expected to provide physical and mental benefits and contribute to the local economy and state revenue. In a country like Indonesia, which prioritizes tourism, *sports tourism* has great potential to support individual well-being and economic growth (Nabila et al., 2024).

Tourism involves temporary travel to various destinations, such as recreation, business, or education (Kartiko et al., 2023). Its activities include destination management, service provision, and activities that support the tourist experience, both active and passive, tailored to individual needs (Muko et al., 2023). Tourism has become a necessity for many people, with

activities ranging from entertainment, relaxation, business, education, and even pilgrimage (BERNAKI & MARSO, 2023). These various motivations have attracted the attention of the government, the private sector, and related parties to develop the tourism industry, which also plays a vital role in environmental preservation through conservation-based management of natural resources (Cantika Mutiara K et al., 2024).

Sports tourism has become a crucial segment of the global tourism industry. Sports tourism activities are found in numerous destinations in Indonesia and other countries. The government and the private sector are developing numerous sporting events to provide tourist attractions supporting physical and mental fitness. Tourists are beginning to see the benefits of sports tourism, creating a positive opportunity for the government and the private sector to organize sporting events that attract tourists to specific destinations. This represents a powerful collaboration in meeting the needs and desires of tourists.

Tourism and sports are two disciplines that can be combined to create a powerful multiplier effect on economic growth in Indonesia. *Sports tourism* is receiving significant attention from the government, the private sector, the sports industry, the tourism industry, academics, and the wider community. Sports *tourism* is a new tourism and sports development paradigm, especially in Indonesia (Nabila et al., 2024). Therefore, *sports tourism* is expected to become a trend, thanks to support from the government and various parties, which aligns with the increasing demand for sports tourism by tourists.

Achievement in recreational sports involves various elements that support physical, social, and mental well-being. These elements are crucial for creating a positive atmosphere where individuals can participate in physical activity for enjoyment, not just for competition. Participating in recreational sports can strengthen community connections, increase self-esteem, and encourage a balanced lifestyle that benefits overall health. Furthermore, recreational sports provide opportunities for skill development and personal growth, allowing individuals to explore new interests and challenge themselves in a supportive environment. This involvement also fosters cooperation and collaboration, as participants learn to work together toward a common goal, which enhances social interaction and builds lasting friendships (Sumantri & Agustinah, 2024).

In recent decades, the intersection between sport and tourism has emerged as a dynamic and rapidly growing field known as sport tourism. Sport tourism refers to travel undertaken to participate in or watch sports-related activities, either formally or informally. It combines the recreational value of sports with the experiential richness of travel, creating a unique form of tourism that can strengthen local identity, support economic growth, and attract diverse visitor demographics. This form of tourism is increasingly recognized as a tool for destination marketing, sustainable development, and community empowerment (Amar et al., 2022).

With its abundant natural and cultural resources, Indonesia holds significant potential for sport tourism development. One such promising area is Pekalongan City, located on the northern coast of Central Java. Renowned for its batik heritage, which UNESCO designates as an

intangible cultural heritage, Pekalongan also has appealing coastal landscapes. Among its notable tourism assets is Pantai Pasir Kencana, a beach that has undergone substantial revitalization efforts in recent years.

Revitalized in 2022, Pantai Pasir Kencana now features amenities such as jogging tracks, family recreation areas, a cultural performance stage (Keong Stage), swimming pools, and the iconic *Batik Tower*, symbolizing local creativity and cultural pride. These developments enhance the site's attractiveness and open new opportunities for integrating sports-based activities into the tourism experience.

However, despite the improved infrastructure, the integration of sport tourism at Pantai Pasir Kencana remains underdeveloped. Organized sport events, recreational programs, and collaborative promotion among stakeholders are still limited. This gap presents a strategic opportunity to transform the Beach into a sustainable, community-based sport tourism destination. A well-structured sport tourism initiative can increase tourist arrivals, stimulate the local economy, create employment opportunities, and contribute to regional income.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the sport tourism potential of Pantai Pasir Kencana using a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) framework. This research will provide practical insights for developing development strategies for local governments, tourism stakeholders, and community organizations. Ultimately, it aspires to support the vision of Pekalongan as a competitive and sustainable sport tourism destination that promotes health, culture, and economic vitality.

METHODS

The research method applied in this study is a qualitative descriptive approach. Qualitative research is designed to describe and analyze phenomena based on the natural context and the perspectives of the research subjects. A theoretical framework is used to guide the focus of the study by actual field conditions and to serve as the basis for discussing and interpreting the results.

This study conducted a comprehensive literature review to strengthen the theoretical basis and provide insights into sport tourism management, management functions, SWOT analysis, and sustainable development strategies. Various relevant studies have been reviewed, such as the work by (Febrianto et al., 2023; Kartiko et al., 2023; Spadaro et al., 2023; Sukwika & Nurlestari, 2024), which highlight the use of SWOT analysis, stakeholder collaboration, and local community involvement in the development of sport tourism in different regions of Indonesia.

These studies emphasize that sport tourism development relies heavily on effective management, the involvement of local communities, supportive infrastructure, precise planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling functions.

The functions of sport management include planning (Fauzi et al., 2024; Gopal, 2023; Liu et al., 2024; Sudarmanto et al., 2024), organizing (Deery & Jago, 2005), staffing (Febrianto et al., 2023), and leading. 2023; Nabila et al., 2024;

To map the internal and external factors influencing sport tourism development at Pantai Pasir Kencana, this study uses the SWOT

analysis model (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats). SWOT analysis helps identify the strengths and weaknesses of internal aspects and the opportunities and threats from the external environment (Freddy, 2014). This analysis supports the strategic planning to develop sport tourism that integrates local potential, sustainability, and competitive advantage.

This study's primary data collection techniques are field observation, interviews, literature review, and documentation. Observations were carried out to assess the physical condition, facilities, and supporting infrastructure of Pantai Pasir Kencana. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with relevant stakeholders, including:

- 21 questions for the Youth and Sports Tourism Office of Pekalongan City,
- 23 questions for the village government and UPTD Pantai Pasir Kencana,
- 22 questions for the local community and tourism-related businesses,
- 19 questions for domestic and international visitors.

The validity of the collected data is ensured through triangulation, involving multiple data sources and techniques to cross-check the information obtained. The collected data were coded, categorized, reduced, displayed, and interpreted systematically to formulate recommendations and strategies.

The overall goal of this method is to analyze the current conditions, identify constraints and opportunities, and develop practical strategies for sustainable sport tourism at Pantai Pasir Kencana. The results are expected to support local government policy, strengthen

community engagement, and contribute to regional tourism development planning.

Table 1.1 Instrument Grid

No.	Subject	Research Focus	Information Collected	Data Source
1	Youth and Sports Tourism Office	Types of tourism, development policies	Types of sport tourism, developed, planning documents, and development programs.	DISPORAPAR Pekalongan City
2	Regional Government & UPTD	Natural resources, area potential	Coastal landscape, sea, Batik Tower, cultural sites, accessibility, support facilities	Village Government, UPTD Pantai Pasir Kencana
3	Local Community & Businesses	Facilities and infrastructure	Toilets, parking area, prayer rooms, road access, maintenance, cleanliness, food stalls, lodging	Community leaders, UMKM operators
4	Tourists	Visitor activities and preferences	Visitor motivations, activities done on-site, satisfaction level, suggestions for sport tourism activities	Domestic and international visitors

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Kekuatan potensi *sport tourism* di Pantai Pasir Kencana Kota Pekalongan,

provided in tables and figures, should no longer be repeated in the text. However, the text should focus on the importance of the study's principal findings. In general, journal papers will contain three to seven figures and tables. The same data can not be presented as tables and figures.

The research results show that Pasir Kencana Beach has a strong foundation that supports the development of *sports tourism* through structured destination management and the support of relevant basic facilities. Under the auspices of the Tourism Office and the Pasir Kencana Beach Technical Implementation Unit (UPTD), the management structure has been systematically organized with a clear division of functions, ranging from area management and activity planning to promotion. This aligns with the opinion of Panchenko & Chernenko (2021), who emphasized that effective tourism management requires measurable planning, organization, direction, and control so that each

management unit can carry out its functions according to its role and authority.

The clear work structure in the Pasir Kencana Beach management area is also supported by a division of duties between field officers, attraction managers, cleaning staff, and security personnel. According to Mollah et al. (2021), managing a tourist destination requires cross-departmental coordination to ensure optimal service delivery and responsiveness to visitor needs. In sports tourism management, this cross-functional collaboration prevents overlapping authority and supports sustainable program implementation.

Basic facilities such as *jogging tracks*, beach volleyball courts, open spaces, playgrounds, and communal exercise areas support recreational sports activities in coastal areas. This aligns with the findings of Parashar & Agarwal (2024), who emphasized the importance of providing facilities tailored to visitors' activity needs to maximize the destination's potential. Beachside *jogging paths*, for example, offer an open-air exercise experience with a natural feel, which is a key attraction.

According to Janpavle & Ile (2023), providing activities that support social interaction and active recreation will strengthen the destination's image as an inclusive public space. At Pasir Kencana Beach, supporting facilities such as the Cultural Stage, Batik Tower, and open green areas also support implementing culturally themed sporting events, community festivals, and environmental education. This concept is by Trisoko et al. (2024), who stated that tourist destinations that can integrate natural beauty, local culture, and physical activity have a competitive advantage in attracting tourists with special interests (*special interest tourism*).

The research also shows that local community support is a crucial strength. Mass exercise activities, *fun runs*, and beach volleyball are regularly held, involving residents and visitors, highlighting the community's active participation in utilizing beach facilities. This supports Ezzatian's (2025) view that local community collaboration is key to the successful development of open-destination-based sports tourism.

In addition, Pasir Kencana Beach's strategic geographic location, connected to a fishing port and a mangrove education area, opens up opportunities for developing *eco-sport tourism programs*. According to Rakhmonov (2024), tourist destinations with the potential for cross-functional development, such as ecotourism, sports, and culture, can address the trend of sustainable tourism that combines recreation with education.

Regarding human resources, management officers and support staff in the field also possess basic knowledge of destination management and visitor handling. Although not all have tourism certification, regular training and technical assistance demonstrate a commitment to continuously improving management competency. This aligns with Wardhana et al. (2024), who stated that human resource quality is a critical variable in the success of tourism destination management, particularly in public services and visitor safety.

2. Weaknesses in sports tourism at Pasir Kencana Beach, Pekalongan City

The research results show that *sports tourism development* at Pasir Kencana Beach still faces several serious weaknesses. One major weakness is limited funding, which impacts facility maintenance, the addition of sports facilities, and strengthening destination promotion. According to Ciobanu (2023), the success of tourism destination development is determined by natural beauty and the quality of adequate and sustainable supporting facilities.

The condition of facilities and infrastructure at Pasir Kencana Beach, such as the *jogging track*, beach volleyball net, changing rooms, restrooms, and children's play area, still shows physical damage and suboptimal maintenance at several points. This is in line with the findings of Sindy C Tumurang et al. (2024), who emphasized the importance of regular public facility management to ensure visitor safety and comfort, especially in open tourist destinations

that are vulnerable to damage due to coastal weather.

Furthermore, limited monitoring and evaluation instruments for sports tourism activities also pose a challenge. Currently, data collection is manual and focuses solely on ticket volume, neglecting visitor needs such as sports interest, facility satisfaction, and evaluation of physical activity safety. According to Li et al. (2023), sports tourism destinations need an objective, data-driven monitoring system to ensure programs are relevant and adaptable to tourism trends.

Other findings indicate a lack of active participation across sectors, such as local sponsors, educational institutions, and the private sector, in supporting *sports tourism programs*. However, a study by Pasquinelli & Trunfio (2023) emphasized that multi-stakeholder partnerships are key to successful destination innovation, particularly in creating a sustainable activity agenda. From a visitor perspective, low awareness of maintaining the cleanliness of beaches and public facilities is also a non-technical weakness that impacts the destination's image. Litter, vandalism, and violations of attraction regulations are typical on holidays with high visitor numbers. This supports the findings of Iannaccone et al. (2024), who stated that visitor behavior presents a unique challenge in managing open destinations.

Pasir Kencana Beach's weaknesses lie in limited maintenance funding, suboptimal data-based monitoring, minimal cross-sectoral support, and low visitor awareness. These factors

must be addressed through improved management, increased budgeting, strengthened collaboration, and ongoing public education to maximize its *sports tourism potential*.

3. Potential opportunities for *sports tourism* at Pasir Kencana Beach in Pekalongan City

The research also shows that Pasir Kencana Beach offers strategic opportunities that can be optimized to support the development of *sports tourism*. One of the most significant opportunities is the increasing public interest in sports-based tourism and physical activity in open spaces. These findings support the study by Anarbaev & Kurmanbaev (2023), which asserted that sports tourism can be a leading sector supporting healthy lifestyles and active recreation.

The presence of distinctive tourist icons, such as the Batik Tower, the Cultural Stage, and the mangrove area, opens up opportunities to develop *sports tourism activities* integrated with cultural tourism and environmental education. According to Gudiksen (2024), cross-theme integration in tourist destinations can increase added value and attract tourists with specific interests.

In addition, support from local government programs in revitalizing coastal destinations supports opportunities to improve the quality of facilities, and integrated promotions can create a series of routine activities, such as *fun runs*, beach volleyball, mass gymnastics, and *pushbike competitions*. This opportunity aligns with the views of Hamzah et

al. (2024), who emphasized the importance of a routine agenda to maintain the consistency of tourist visits. Using digital media as a promotional tool is also an important opportunity. Implementing digital marketing strategies through social media, local influencers, and tourism applications opens opportunities to expand the tourist market. According to David Adi Saputra (2023), digital promotion effectively reaches young tourists, the main target of the sports tourism segment.

Pasir Kencana Beach's easy access from the city center, terminals, and major transportation routes is a distinct advantage. This location can be optimized by hosting cross-regional events that have the potential to attract regional tourists. In line with Dileep & Pagliara (2023), supporting infrastructure and good accessibility will strengthen the destination's position in the regional tourism competition map.

By optimizing these opportunities, Pasir Kencana Beach has strong potential to develop into a *sports tourism destination* integrated with education, culture, and a local community-based creative economy.

4. Potential Threats to *Sports Tourism* at Pasir Kencana Beach, Pekalongan City

In addition to strengths and opportunities, the research reveals several potential threats that could hinder the development of *sports tourism* at Pasir Kencana Beach. The primary threat is the risk of infrastructure damage due to unpredictable coastal weather conditions, such as abrasion, tidal flooding, or strong winds. According to

Modi (2024), coastal tourist destinations need risk mitigation and infrastructure maintenance systems that adapt to natural conditions. Competition with other tourist destinations in and around Pekalongan also poses a serious challenge. New destinations with modern concepts and more comprehensive facilities could attract tourists if Pasir Kencana Beach fails to innovate and continuously improve. This aligns with Azmi et al. (2023), who explain service differentiation's importance in maintaining visitor loyalty.

Poor monitoring of visitor behavior can also damage public facilities. Littered trash, graffiti on facilities, and indiscriminate use of sports areas can degrade the quality of facilities and impact the comfort of other visitors. This finding is supported by Lev et al. (2023), who emphasize the need for visitor behavior management through education and intensive supervision. Another threat comes from fluctuations in tourist visits, which tend to be heavy only on weekends and holidays. Reliance on seasonal events risks reducing revenue from weekday levies.

According to Johar et al. (2022), a destination's success requires diversifying daily programs to maintain the stability of visits. In general, these problems emphasize the importance of strengthening risk management, program innovation, monitoring visitor behavior, and diversifying tourism products so that Pasir Kencana Beach can remain competitive and develop as a resilient *sports tourism destination in the future*.

CONCLUSION

Conclusions should be drawn based on research findings, concerns formulated, and research purposes.

The conclusion is presented in one paragraph without

1. Pasir Kencana Beach's strategic location in Pekalongan City offers easy access for local and out-of-town tourists. Its natural features and open space support a variety of beach sports activities. Existing sports activities, such as community gymnastics, beach volleyball, jogging, and children's pushbikes, demonstrate the enthusiasm of visitors and the local community, providing important social capital.
2. *Weaknesses:* Supporting facilities at Pasir Kencana Beach are still inadequate. Several facilities, such as the swimming pool, the snack stage, the gazebo, and the children's playground, are damaged or poorly maintained. Water sports facilities are also not yet optimally available. Furthermore, community involvement is still limited to the informal sector, and destination promotion, particularly through digital media, has not been optimally managed.
3. *Opportunities:* The enthusiasm of the public, the sports community, and support from local sporting events like POPDA and the Mayor's Cup demonstrate significant sustainable sports tourism development opportunities. The presence of MSMEs

around the coast can also support sports tourism activities by providing culinary and visitor necessities. The potential for cross-sector collaboration with schools, private institutions, and creative communities is wide open to strengthen the appeal of sports tourism.

4. *Threats:* Some external obstacles faced include limited maintenance budgets, the effects of coastal weather accelerating facility deterioration, competition with other tourist destinations, and suboptimal policies supporting *sports tourism* at the regional level. If not addressed, these threats could hamper the program's sustainability and reduce tourist interest.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Contributors who are not mentioned as authors should be acknowledged, and their particular contribution should be described. All funding sources for the work must be acknowledged, and both the research funder and the grant number (if applicable) should be given for each source.

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